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**SCHAKOWSKY: *REPUBLICANS CAN'T CONTROL THEIR APPETITE
FOR LIMITING CONSUMERS'
LEGAL RIGHTS & PROTECTING CORPORATE INTERESTS***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today opposed the latest effort by the Republican Congress to strip away consumers' rights. Schakowsky voted against the so-called Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, a bill that would shield food manufacturers and sellers from "frivolous" lawsuits, while denying consumers their Constitutional right to seek legal recourse.

"The epidemic of obesity is about to surpass smoking as the number one cause of preventable death in the country but Republicans would rather limit legal rights instead of talking about solution to help consumers limit fat," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky, for example, pointed to the Bush Administration's efforts to block the World Health Organization's global initiative to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases.

The bill bans individuals from bringing any civil liability action against a food manufacturer or seller in Federal or State courts with claims that the individual suffered an injury or potential injury resulting from a person's weight gain, obesity, or any health condition that is associated with a person's weight gain.

"Why are Republicans so distrustful of juries and judges? Very few obesity lawsuits have been filed and even fewer have made it to court. As a matter of fact, all obesity lawsuits have been dismissed, including the case against McDonalds in 2002," Schakowsky said.

She added that because of the publicity surrounding the McDonald's case, "we have seen several voluntary gestures of corporate responsibility with McDonald's withdrawing super-sized meals and now offering the 'Go Active Meal' for adults that will include a healthy salad along with exercise tools."

"This is a health epidemic, and consumers have some responsibility, but industry has a

role to play and should not be exempted from all liability.□ Republicans can't seem to control their appetite for limiting legal rights and protecting corporate interests," Schakowsky concluded.